



# Embassy of the United States of America

## Public Affairs Section, La Paz, Bolivia

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## U.S. Embassy to sponsor Fall Artisan Festival in La Paz

Fifty-three participants will offer export-quality products during the Fall Artisan Festival, organized by the American British International Association (ABIA).

This Fall Artisan Festival will take place on April 23 and 24 at Cristo Redentor Church (between Calles 24 and 25, Calacoto, at the entrance to Cota Cota), from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Several groups of artisans supported by the Aid to Artisans program and 35 independent artists will offer hand-made items such as sweaters, dolls, jigsaw puzzles, jewelry, iron and wooden decorative objects, products made of alpaca wool, leather, pewter and glass, baskets, clothes, ceramics, photographs, and others. The festival is organized by ABIA and Aid to Artisans, a program of the U.S. government Agency for International Development (USAID).

This fair has become a mainstream handicraft event that features export-quality products and creative designs by more than 50 artisans from all over Bolivia. This festival will also offer international food, entertainment, and music.

The proceeds to be collected by ABIA for the organization of this fair will be donated to charities. Annually, ABIA provides more than \$10,000 to charitable organizations in La Paz and El Alto. Last year, the benefited charities were:

**LUZ DE ESPERANZA (LIGHT OF HOPE)**– This project, begun in 2000 in the altiplano region by Catholic nuns of the Heart of Jesus order, provides shelter to more than 30 youths who otherwise would be living on the streets. ABIA provides funds on a monthly basis to Luz de Esperanza, which allowed for the purchase of construction equipment for their shelter, food, and tools to provide technical education to the youngsters. Their program also includes classes on computer use, carpentry, animal care, bakery, garden care, sewing, cooking and artisan training.

**HOSPITAL DEL NIÑO (CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL)**– ABIA provides a monthly donation for this hospital, located in Miraflores, La Paz. The funds are used for purchasing medical and pharmaceutical equipment, and medicines that benefit patients from low-income families who cannot afford them. ABIA started this program in May 2001. Several ABIA partners are active volunteers at the hospital, and they work on identifying needs and overseeing the use of such funds.

**COMEDOR POPULAR (POPULAR REFECTORY)** ABIA funding has contributed to equip the facilities of the refectory. Floors have been repaired, walls painted, and bathrooms remodeled. Also, kitchen items have been bought and an oven was installed. Low-income people come to the refectory to eat, use the showers, or get a haircut. In some cases they even take shelter there to stay overnight. The people pay a small amount of money for their food.

ABIA also provides support to other charities such as ADULAM Mission, SEDEGES, and Kallutaca Children's Home. For more information on the fair, please contact:

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